

# Where the NEW YEARS Custom of Calling Never Grows Old



Chinese Minister  
and Madam Wu

FROM the very first, the custom of making social calls upon New Year's Day seems to have been one of the principal ways of observing the celebration. In many cities of the country this custom is still kept up in a more or less desultory manner, but in Washington it never flags.

New Year's visiting never grows old under the capitol's dome. On the contrary, it is an institution that society recognizes and honors with all the elaborate ceremony of official formality.

From the "Happy New Year" of the President of the United States down to and including the departmental colored messengers' happy and glad "New Year, boys," the greeting passes along through the various ranks of officialdom. The judges of the Supreme Court, the members of the diplomatic corps, the cabinet officials, the senators, the representatives, the officers of the Army and the Navy and the Marine Corps, the departmental chiefs of bureau, the clerical forces, many of Washington's citizens, and the pompous messengers all make calls. It is a part of their lives, a part of their business.

President Roosevelt is the only man in official Washington who does not make calls on New Year's Day. But he receives more callers in a few hours than the average hospitable and well-to-do citizen could wish to have trudge over his parlor carpet in the course of a complete presidential term of four years. The President shakes thousands of hands, and if he cares to, utters reasonable greetings, always wearing the "delighted" smile that won't come off—even though he is more than weary of doing so. Patiently and painfully, too, he stands in the reception-room of the White House and performs the arduous duty of wishing the nation a "Happy New Year" for a period of three long hours and a half. His arms ache from the constant handshaking—and, it is said, the outgoing master of the White House has made quite a reputation as a hand-shaker during his long term of office. On New Year's Day he holds open house for everyone—even the plainest and humblest—and as the highest servant of the whole people he is right on the job.

When his day's work is done he would hardly be in a position to enjoy making calls should he be expected to do so. But precedent abhors him—and Washington officials are great on precedent. The President's New Year's reception to everybody that wishes to see him and

greet him has been an institution in Washington for almost one year. There have been a few interruptions, notably during the trying times of the Civil War; but the official appetite for the observance of the day has never diminished.

December is spent in making preparations for this great occasion. The Diplomatic Corps has its brilliant court plume taken out of camp, so to speak, and put in order for the day. The Army, Navy and Marine Corps officers are busy furnishing up their dress uniforms and the side-arms worn with that costume. No man entitled to wear a decoration or medal of honor ever neglects to see that they are placed on his uniform. Everything must be spotless when the wearers wend his way to the big white mansion of the President.

Colonel Brownell, U. S. A., Superintendent of Public Buildings and Grounds and Chief Military Aide to the President, is in charge of all the arrangements for the reception, as he is regarding all other social functions at the White House. The Colonel has received great praise for the manner in which he has made these events run along smoothly. He has had to refuse many things demanded of him, but he has the faculty of making these refusals gracefully. Refusals must be made—that is the soldier part of Colonel Brownell's work. They must be made with the minimum of offense—that is where the diplomat comes in. Colonel Brownell is a diplomat as well as a soldier.

On this coming New Year's morning, from eleven o'clock until one, the President will receive the representatives of every branch of the national government and the government of the District of Columbia. The diplomats accredited here, delegates from patriotic societies and civilians will pay their respects between those hours—but with precise observance of the carefully arranged program for the time of their calls.

The President and Mrs. Roosevelt, accompanied by Colonel Brownell and other military aides, and the wives of

Baron  
Mouchet  
Belgian  
Minister  
Accompanied  
by his wife

the cabinet officers whom Mrs. Roosevelt has assisting, will take their place in the "Blue Room" of the White House promptly at eleven o'clock. The Vice-President and the members of the cabinet also take their places. After the receiving party has taken its position and exchanged formal greetings, the Secretary of State steps to the left of the President and presents each member of the Diplomatic Corps to the President in order of seniority of service at Washington. This point of precedent is most carefully observed, the diplomat who has served his country longest as the head of its embassy in Washington, is the Dean of the Corps, as such, he leads the gorgeous procession. The others follow with the same punctilious regard for service. The present Dean of the Diplomatic Corps is Baron Meyer des Planches, ambassador from Italy.

The scene is a brilliant one, a perfect riot of color. The gorgeousness of the uniforms, whether court, military or naval; the flashing of the jeweled decorations and orders; the Oriental costumes of some of the diplomats and the very latest thing in fashions of many lands, shown by the elaborate gowns of the ladies who accompany them, are reminders of old-world courts, and constitute undecidable splendor to the American eye.

Four blasts of the bugle and the reception is on. The United States Marine Band is stationed in an alcove adjoining the room, and plays throughout the entire reception. There is no gaudy at-

tempt at an elaborate floral display.

Many of the diplomats and their wives are well known and frequently received guests at the White House. With these the President exchanges a few informal words of greeting, and the line passes on.

At the conclusion of the reception of the diplomats, Secretary and Mrs. Root leave for their own home, where the diplomats are received by them at breakfast, a custom which has prevailed for many years. The occasion is always a very formal one. The host and hostess are assisted by various members of the State Department staff in offering the hospitality of the day. When the guests are in line, all wear their full-dress uniforms, with side arms and decorations. Their arrival in the Blue Room gives additional color and brilliancy to the scene of splendor. After passing before the line the officers leave the White House and take up the round of calls upon their friends in the city.

The various patriotic societies which participate in the reception are next received. Among these orders may be mentioned the Companions of the Military Order of the Royal Legion of the United States, the Spanish War Veterans, Sons of the American Revolution, the Grand Army of the Republic, the Medal of Honor Legion and others.

This concludes the official reception, which usually lasts two hours. A short recess is taken for refreshments and then the stage is set, so to speak, for the public reception. Outside the White House

gress, senators, representatives and delegates, are then received. Political differences are laid aside and the spirit of the New Year is entered into. All of the congressmen are known to the President, by name, at least, and he usually has a word or so of greeting for each one, more hospitable than the stereotyped "Happy New Year."

The officers of the Army, Navy and the Marine Corps then enter in the order named, the Army having the head of the line by virtue of seniority of organization. As the officers are ordered to be present, all of them on the active list stationed at Washington or at nearby posts, and many of the veterans on the retired list, are in line. All wear their full-dress uniforms, with side arms and decorations. Their arrival in the Blue Room gives additional color and brilliancy to the scene of splendor. After passing before the line the officers leave the White House and take up the round of calls upon their friends in the city.

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Baron Mouchet  
Ambassador from  
Austria-Hungary

men and women stand for hours in the chilly atmosphere awaiting their turn to clasp the hand of the President and view the brilliant scene. Chief of the Secret Service Wilkie and a large detail of his men, reinforced by a strong detachment from the metropolitan police force in citizens' clothes as well as in uniform, are now on the job. An attempt has never been made on the President's life during a New Year's reception, and with the precautions now taken it could not possibly be successful. Here and there among the crowd these guardians of the nation's chief are alert and ready for any emergency. Chief Wilkie takes his stand behind the President in the receiving line, within a few feet of the line are the flower of his effective organization. Their eyes are on each individual, and they take no chances. Other Secret Service men in the disguise of waiters or doormen watch the line as it passes in and out. Many of the force are distributed in the crowd, and any suspicious movement or peculiarity of an individual is noticed and he is removed outside of the White House grounds, where he is turned over to a policeman in uniform, whose duty it is to see that he does not re-enter.

The line passes in front of the President quickly, and in an hour and a half the reception is over. The psychology of the people who attend the reception to the public is very interesting. Here is a banker, silk-hatted and fur-coated, side by side with an old Southern mammy who lives in the atmosphere of bygone better days. Here is a neatly clad young woman, whose appearance denotes her birth and breeding, a few feet removed from her no less welcome sister, the tired wife of some meek man who has taken an hour from her daily duty to live thereafter in the shadow of the presidential smile and hearty greeting. Looking down the line one sees a colored street cleaner flanked by a dapper soldier, in khaki, and then at the end of it all come several policemen who have done a hard day's work in the open air, but who would not miss the opportunity of hearing the President's "delighted."

The President's reception is all over and attention now turns to the doings of the rest of officialdom. Vice President and Mrs. Fairbanks, assisted by the members of their family, and other chosen guests, receive from the close of the President's reception until 6 o'clock, all those of the official set who call. Members of the Diplomatic Corps, senators and representatives are always among the Vice President's callers. They are informally entertained, and ten is served. The cabinet officers and their wives find time during the day to pay their respects

to each other and to entertain the large number of officials who call upon them. Senators and representatives make hurried calls here and there all day long. Carriages dash along the streets of the city with unobtrusive regularity. It is a case of every official making as many calls as possible in the shortest time, and the day is filled out in this manner.

In the case of the rank and file in the government service it is practically the unanimous custom for all the clerks in the division to call upon their chief, who in turn calls upon his chief, who in turn calls upon the assistant secretary in charge of his branch of the service, and there you are.

Society is out in full force on the afternoon of New Year's Day. In the selectest avenue and other fashionable boulevards of the city are fairly alive with carriages and people. Handsome broughams bearing smartly powdered women and irreproachably frock-coated men, vanguard their way from street to street, from door to door, stopping but a scant ten minutes or so at each home. Tea and wafers and punch, and sometimes more elaborate refreshments, are served at these New Year's "at homes."

New Year's afternoon is the great day for the Washington bachelors. Silk-hatted, frock-coated, with their walking sticks swinging jauntily, they walk or drive, according to preference or the clemency of the weather, from one friend's house to another.

Within they meet the girls and matrons of their "set" assisting the hostess. There is nothing in it but brief social chat with a dozen friends or acquaintances, a little refreshment and gracefully made wishes for a happy New Year and a fortunate season.

At all of the fashionable men's clubs "open house" is the rule, and there is an apparently endless stream of men, Washingtonians and visitors from all parts of the globe entering and leaving their hospitable doors throughout the afternoon.

All classes are interested and the only difference between the wealthy and those in moderate circumstances seems to be one of elaborate, or lack of it, of floral decorations, clothes and the necessities for the reception.

Of all the holidays on the calendar, New Year's is more laboriously observed from the social standpoint, than any. In Washington the New Year's custom of calling never grows old. One-half of Washington wishes the other a "Happy New Year"—and the other half returns the compliment.

## NEW YEAR'S EVE in GOTHAM'S MILLION DOLLAR HOTELS

By A. P. PARKHURST, JR.



Hotel Knickerbocker's  
Dining Room

HAVE you reserved your table yet for New Year's Eve? Not well then I am afraid you will have to spend the evening at home, for there is not a table to be had at any of the principal hotels for the love of money.

The foregoing is one of a thousand conversations heard daily around the foyers of those hotels where women of fashion are wont to assemble each afternoon, and it will serve to illustrate just what New Year's Eve in New York means to the proprietors of those hotels which only the wealthy and fashionable folk of that and other cities patronize.

There is one night in every 365 in which the hotel as well as the smart set of New York give themselves up to a spirit of revelry and then attend the obsequies of the old year and in the same breath celebrate the birth of the new. All restraint is thrown to the winds and everybody enters into the spirit of the night with an abandon that eclipses even the scenes of the Mardi Gras when New Orleans is en fête. The streets are simply packed with a good-natured crowd of merry-makers, and the restaurants and cafes are crowded to their capacity, since everybody either wants to take one part or drink before they climb up in the water wagon for the new year, or else drink a toast to the new-born babe.

But this story will have to do with those who can afford to pay any price demanded for their night's fun, and in consequence they invariably seek their pleasures beneath the hospitable roofs of the Waldorf-Astoria, the Plaza, the New Astor, the Knickerbocker, or one of the other large hotels for which New York is famous.

Here are to be found those men and women whose names are bywords in the fashionable and official life of the nation's metropolis, and should a stranger happen in at any of these palatial hostilities on New Year's Eve, and have pointed out to him all the celebrities there assembled, he would gasp in astonishment, then rub his eyes and look about

him and acknowledge that the stage settings for such distinguished gatherings were in every particular in keeping with the importance of those before him.

For many weeks past these table reservations have been in order at the quarter of hotels here mentioned. At the Waldorf-Astoria every available inch of room is at a premium and were a Croesus to wander in there on the night of December 31 and ask for a table in the cafe, or for a private dining-room for himself and party, he would be told that he was asking an impossibility, for were he to pay a thousand dollars a plate for his party he could not be served there, as every table had been reserved weeks ago. When it is remembered that this hotel has no less than a dozen public dining-rooms and cafes, to say nothing of the many private apartments, such a statement might be regarded by the uninitiated as a gross exaggeration. In the beautiful Rose Room the main dining-room that fronts on Fifth Avenue, hundreds of persons can be comfortably served. The men's cafe on the Thirty-fourth street just as commodious, as is the grill-room at the extreme western end of the building. There are also to be found many tearooms and palm-rooms, while the grand ballroom and Astor and Waldorf galleries are invariably converted into cafes for this occasion and hundreds of tables dot their floors, while the boxes overlooking the main floor are invariably occupied by gay parties of men and women who are there to observe and to be observed. It is estimated that between eight and ten thousand people dine and sup at the Waldorf on New Year's Eve and in each apartment a full orchestra is maintained, and in several of the apartments high-priced artists are employed to sing and perform for the patrons here gathered.

Last year it required nearly seven hundred waiters to take care of the wants of the fashionable who assembled at the Waldorf to see the old year out and, according to the matrone de hotel, it will require many more servants to assist in dispensing this hotel's hospitality this year.

Yet, despite these vast crowds and the jollity of it all, everything moves along like a bit of well-oiled machinery. Everybody is in a gala mood and everybody intends to enjoy himself to the fullest, and this they do regardless of expense.

In former years these fashionable were wont to wander from one hotel to another on this occasion, but times have changed and experience has taught them where they have been so fortunate as to procure a table or dining-room it is better by far to remain there, since there is little or no chance of being so fortunate elsewhere. Hence, when they elect a hotel in which to spend the evening, nowadays, they stay until the cock crows and the annual revel draws to a close.

At the beautiful Hotel Plaza, among the newest of the city's several million dollar hotels, fashion holds high revel on New Year's Eve. Here Nathan Franko, late concert master of the Metropolitan Opera Company, holds forth with his splendid stringed orchestra, and society worships at his shrine as long as he sees fit to wave his baton and draw forth the beautiful strains and melodies from his matchless orchestra. Every available inch of floor space is utilized on this occasion for table purposes and the ordinarily large force of servants is doubled in an effort to care for those who are here for a good time and to get the very best that the market affords in the way of table delicacies. Here, too, novelties are introduced with surprising rapidity, so that all who here come might find those diversions which titillate them too. The Plaza is strictly a home for millionaires, and here they are to be found as thick as bees about their hives.

The very best acts known to vaudeville are always provided for New Year's Eve, and then, too, the table decorations are always suggestive of the death of the old and the birth of the New Year.



New Astor's Banquet Hall



Main Cafe of the Plaza

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Year.

Another new hotel to come in for a tremendous patronage from the city's most fashionable clientele is the Knickerbocker, which is located at the very crux of the city's tide of travel. An impressive pile of brick and stone, it stands at the junction of Broadway and Forty-second street, and the steady stream of well-dressed humanity that streams in and out of its doors is a source of never-ceasing wonder to those who knew this corner before the birth of the Knickerbocker.

The Marble Palace, as the Plaza is often designated, is not a hotel where the rabble is likely to stroll in to watch the revels of the rich. They know there is no place for them there and no accommodations have been prepared for loungers. Here it is that women—that is, those who are known to the management—are safe to come and go unattended, sure that they will be free from those annoyances that so often beset women in public places.

Invariably some surprise is here planned on New Year's Eve, and just as the raucous tones of the big clock proclaim the hour of midnight a vested choir from some one of the many fashionable Fifth Avenue churches carols

forth and all the pleasure seekers arise reverently to the melody that fills the air and holds the revelers speechless until the last note dies away. Then the glasses clink, toasts are drunk and all the good wishes incidental to the season are exchanged with the cordiality which marks the pleasure seeker who has found and obtained that which he seeks.

The same scenes are enacted at the beautiful New Astor, whose patrons clamor for places at table in some one of its many beautiful dining rooms, where good cheer is dispensed with a lavish hand. Here all the very latest innovations that go to make the visit of its patrons one long to be remembered have been installed and the service accorded is as near perfection as it is possible to make it. New Year's Eve is the one night in the year when everybody meets on a common basis and good fellowship is everywhere reflected. Strains of beautiful music greet the ear from every angle, whether it be in the main dining room, the men's cafe (sometimes called the Hunting Trophy Room), or the beautiful grill room known as the American Indian Room. In each of these apartments tables are reserved weeks ahead and when the last night of the year rolls around there is always a scramble for

table room by some belated aspirant who hopes against hope that some one has failed to come and claim his table.

Reservations for between six and eight hundred persons have been made here for New Year's Eve, and in fact, were made months ago. So great is the demand for tables here that as much as a hundred dollars is frequently offered for such reservations. The beautiful soft lights that flood this house shed their luster upon perhaps the most beautiful table to assemble beneath one roof on a single night. Here are to be found the most exclusive grand dames of society touching elbows with some stage celebrity, while nearly all the song birds of the two grand opera companies located in New York, make this their headquarters. Naturally unusual preparations have to be made for caring for a crowd made up of so many nationalities and of so many celebrities from this country as well as those from foreign climes.

The task is a difficult one, but all moves smoothly, and the musical and entertainment programs are arranged with rare discretion and with due care that every manner of taste might be gratified. It is no uncommon sight to see from ropes stretched across the entrances to the various dining apartments in the Knickerbocker, a silent reminder to late comers that there is not room for another soul within that apartment. The beautiful main dining-room on the first floor is no more popular on these occasions than is the tearoom adjoining, or the grill beneath, or the beautifully proportioned banquet halls and ball rooms above. Each has its devotees and thus they gather and enjoy themselves as only a well-bred and wealthy group of men and women can.

Outside the ceaseless stream of humanity that is confining its celebration to wandering up and down Broadway, contributing their mite to the din that arises from every quarter, pauses, wanders in, looks about and then strolls forth to seek refreshments at some more modest establishment, recognizing at a glance that there is no place within for them.

Some say that New York goes crazy each New Year's Eve, and to judge from the thousands upon thousands of people who stream through the streets from sunset to sunrise, one would not think the persons making this remark far from right. No celebration in the civilized world can equal it, and there is much in the celebration that strongly smacks of the uncivilized. It is verily a night

of fun, a night of revelry and the participants give themselves up to unrestrained joy, well knowing that all restrictions have been cast aside by custodians of the peace and as long as the fun is conducted along innocent and harmless lines there is no limit to it.

It is the one night in the year when the New York street urban can turn to his erstwhile enemy, the "copper," and tell him to "go chase himself," without fear of being chased in turn, and this they do to their heart's content.

## Mexico the Land for Emigrants.

The panic of a year ago, while it appeared to center most strongly around Wall Street, New York, and the East, was strongly felt in Mexico, where dozens of new and ambitious enterprises for developing the almost virgin territory of the republic were being pushed by means of capital from the United States. The economic situation in Mexico as a result of that crisis became deplorable, not only because prices on the principal exports to the United States fell to so low a figure as to mean great loss (frequently amounting to bankruptcy) to the exporting houses, but principally because American investments ceased to pour the necessary funds into Mexican enterprises.

Mexico today moody needs emigration of the better class, who can take the place of the bulk of the low-grade native labor, which is shiftless, difficult to teach and harder still to keep at steady labor.

Mexico has tried by setting forth a program of peace and financial security for the successor of the now aged President Diaz to further coax capital to invest in Mexican enterprises.

Schemes to attract immigration from Southern Europe are being financed by the Mexican government, which claims to have strong hopes of success. The climate of Mexico is said to be attractive to emigrants from Italy and Austria, and the two peoples intermarry with frequency, according to the Mexican Immigration Bureau reports.



Waldorf-Astoria's  
Rose Room